



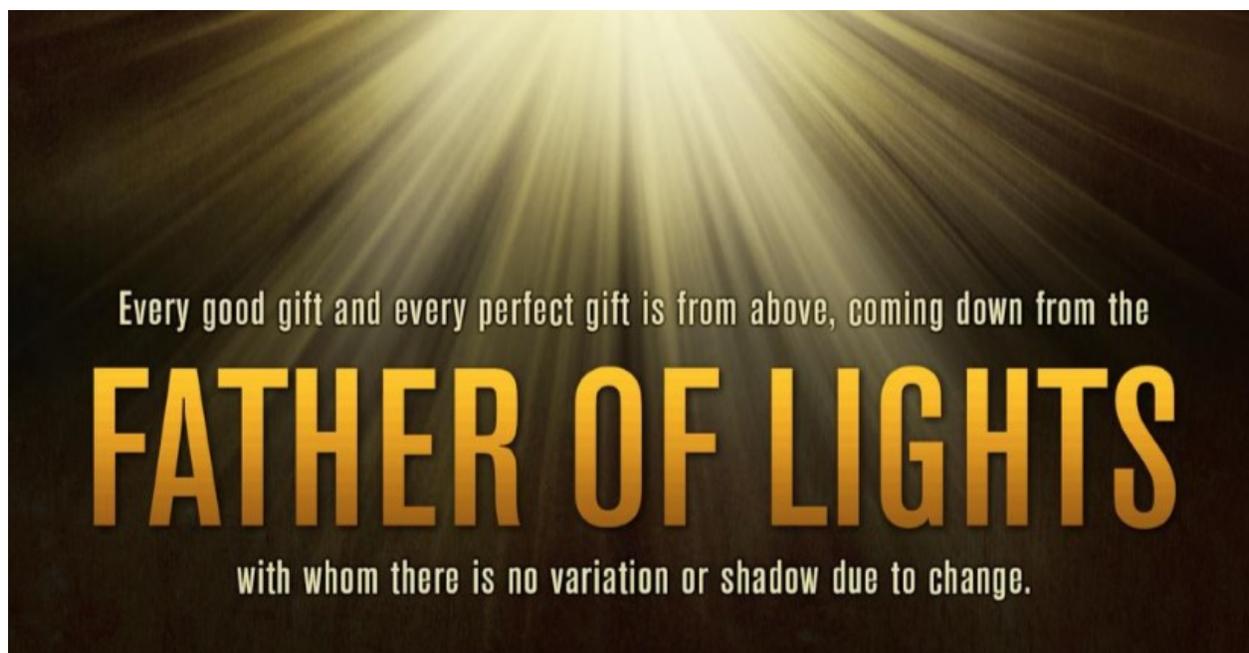
Edition 38

Read this eNews on our website

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eNews ... a monthly email publication of news and information
by and for the women of the LWML MN South District.

A Christmas Message from our President, Deb Vinkemeier



Are you sending out Christmas Cards this year? Sixty-four percent of Americans send out Christmas cards. Some believe it is a traditional celebration of Christmas. They like to bring joy and happiness to their family and friends. They add a letter sharing about the exciting things that have happened in their lives the past months.

But there are many who feel it is an opportunity for sharing God's love with both believers and unbelievers. To them, it is a ministry of telling about the greatest gift we receive at Christmas. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change"* (James 1:17). This Bible verse gives that assurance of God's love which comes to us. This love is not beautifully wrapped up with paper and big bows lying under a decorated Christmas tree, but it is humbly wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

My Christmas prayer for you is that the birth of Jesus brings all that you need this Christmas and fills your heart with the love, joy, and peace throughout the coming year.

Christmas Blessings,
Deb Vinkemeier, President

Human Trafficking - Opening Eyes and Hearts to Help



On Thursday, October 17, the St. Paul, Rost LWML of rural Lakefield invited Ms. Julie Fast to speak on human trafficking in the area. Fifty women from surrounding churches were in attendance to listen to Ms. Fast's personal story of her early rebellious childhood and how she overcame the problems she had with her parents as a teenager. She said that at times, she still has to force herself to put aside some of those feelings.

Having those insights, she is now able to help those who come to her at the Southwest Crisis Center in Worthington as victims of human trafficking. She explained in detail the differences of prostitution, servitude and forced labor that victims face. It is a simple process for those who traffic in humans, not only young girls, but also boys. It usually starts as a "friend" who shows caring for someone who is having trouble with parents or other perceived problems in their life. Unfortunately, she cannot seek out the victim if and until that person comes to her. It is only then that she can try to convince them that there are people who care and want to help them escape their bondage.

As gifts for the Southwest Crisis Center, the LWML collected handbags, totes, blankets, sheets, and personal care items for the month prior to the meeting and presented them to Ms. Fast and the Southwest Crisis Center as Gifts from the Heart.

"Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy, deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (Psalm 82:3-4).

A Glimpse of LAMP ~ Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots



We begin the celebration of Advent, the preparing and waiting for the birth of our Savior. We prepare ourselves with beginning each day with devotions. For years, Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots (LAMP) publishes an Advent devotion book featuring devotions written by their staff and volunteers who have served in the mission field.

LAMP has been providing spiritual witness and nurturing faith in communities in remote areas of northern Canada since 1970 through the ministry of pastor/missionary pilots, and short and long-term volunteers-in-mission. Each year over 5,000 children, youth and adults are impacted by the ministry of LAMP.

Ron Ludke, Executive Director of LAMP, has invited you to enjoy their devotion book by sharing their link to the book at <https://www.lampministry.org/#/news-devotions/>. Please check out their website and see the great ministry they have been doing for 50 years.

Begin this Advent by refreshing your preparation of Christ birth by spending quiet time in devotion and sharing the joy, hope, peace and love with your family and friends.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Romans 15:13).

Fall Rally Season



October is the month for Fall Rallies in our LWML organization. This year the Lyndale Conference Rally occurred October 19th at Christ Lutheran Church in Eagan, MN. The conference rally was facilitated by Mary Mulfinger, Southeast Suburban Zone President, and Mary Torno, St. Croix River Zone President. Pastor Mike Mulso kicked-off the rally with a Bible Study on "How we are Living Out God's Mission". Our guest speaker, Rev. Dr. William Utech, Assistant to the President for Missions, then discussed "How We ALL Fit In God's Mission".

Pastor Mulso dove the rally participants into scripture about disciples serving God through missionary work, which set the stage for the guest speaker. Rev. Dr. William Utech shared about the many churches within the MN South LCMS District working with mission projects in their community and different countries. He also highlighted one of the speakers for the district convention, Chad Kirchoff, Pastor at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church and founder of ReDo Fitness in Hastings, MN. Both speakers set a stage of mission work for LWML.

In addition, President Deb gave an update from the Executive Committee retreat and invited all members to the 2020 LWML MN South District Convention in Willmar. The rally had updates about the upcoming district convention, reports from the National Convention, and a skit from Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Inver Grove Heights. The rally was a great opportunity for LWML participants to get motivated about mission work.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

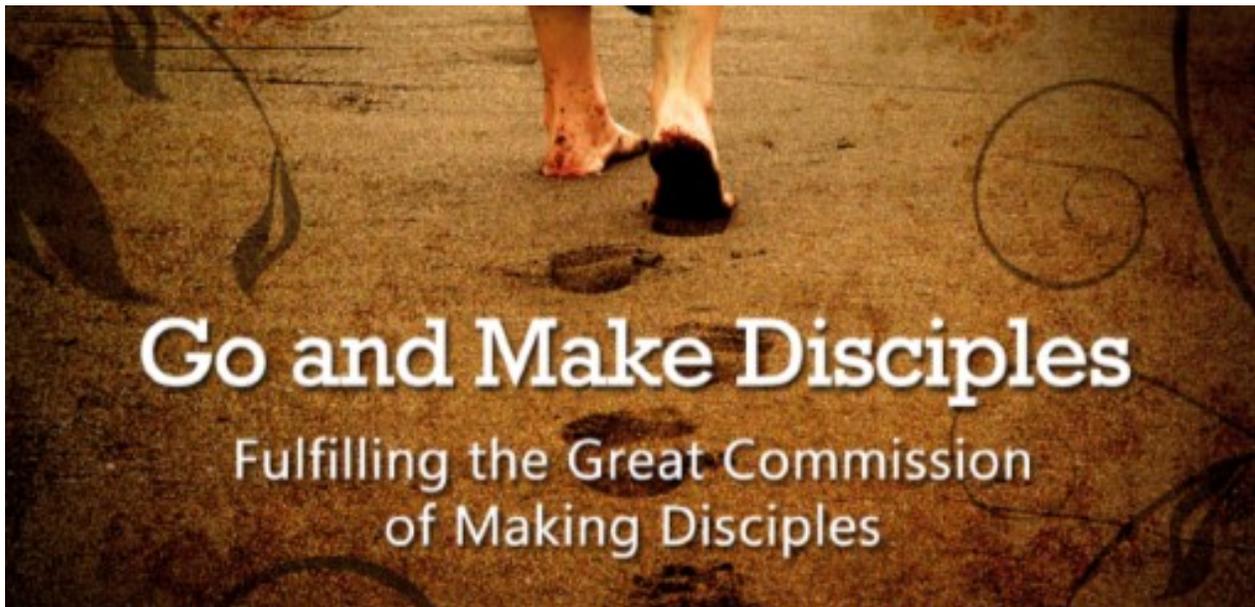
Caring for Jesus' People, One Shoe at a Time!



Sharing God's love can be as easy as tying a shoelace! The LWML society at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Prior Lake collected new and gently used shoes during the month of October to donate to Good in the Hood's Shoe Away Hunger Program.

Good in the Hood sells the donated shoes at an affordable cost, the money earned is used to support the Feed the Future program and services which feeds 4,000 people a month. Over 170 pairs of shoes were donated or purchased using a Thrivent Action Team grant. A group of women met in late October to join in fellowship, a bible study, and sorting the shoes.

Your MN South District Mites at Work in Our Seminaries



Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord!

Thank you so much for your support! My family and I are incredibly grateful. My name is Thomas Gustafson and I am a second-year student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. I have been married to Emily for just over 3 years and we are expecting a baby boy in early January of 2020! YAY!

This year we are continuing to serve at Our Savior Lutheran Church in St. Charles, MO. As a fieldwork student there, I am getting practice and experience leading worship, teaching Bible class, hanging with the youth and much more! This year, I will also have a handful of opportunities to preach.

I am a graduate of Concordia University in St. Paul, MN, where I studied Theology and Christian Ministry; though I am not from Minnesota. I grew up in Eugene, OR. As my family and I prepare to find out about my vicarage placement, we continue to take every opportunity to serve and learn. This past summer, we temporarily relocated to Houston, Texas. While there I served two congregations. The first was a small church plant that worships in a shared space. I got to lead worship, preach, teach, participate in the life of many of the members and even helped shape the future ministry there. The second church was the mother church of this church plant. It was a very large, suburban congregation. While there, I got to experience working with a large staff in team ministry, lead VBS, preach, teach and even live with a couple from the congregation as our summer "hosts".

Emily and I look forward to serving the Lord wherever He may call us. We believe our strengths and gifts equip us to shepherd young people (college ministry), start a church (church planting), or some other unique ministry. No matter where we may be placed, we pray to be faithful and diligent as we teach others about following Jesus and loving them with the love that God has shown us. We had several winters in Minnesota, so somewhere further south with lots of warm sun is appealing, but we trust the Lord to know and to perform His will as is best for us.

We thank you for your support that enables me to get the training I need. Not only that, but the seminary community has been a blessing to both Emily and I as we form lasting friendships. We ask that you continue to pray for us and especially for our little one. May the Lord continue to keep you in His care as you live out the mission of God in your church and community.

In Christ,
Thomas Gustafson

Greetings in the Name of Jesus!

I would first like to say thank you for continuing your support of me as I seek to prepare for pastoral ministry in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. This is a process that began in the Summer of 2014 and the support and encouragement from District and Synod has been abundantly clear and welcomed at every turn. Students like myself would be under great stress and distress without supporting and gracious organizations.

It was the support of faithful pastors and church-workers that encouraged me and caused me to consider pastoral ministry and because of that influence, I desire to become a parish pastor. I have other ideas and aspirations with education and may decide to stay for a few more years at Concordia Seminary in pursuit of an S.T.M. or even a PhD.

Whether its I the parish or in the classroom, I intend to follow wherever it is that the Lord calls, and to work in His Church. I've been consulting and praying with mentors and trusted friends to discern where this path may lead in the future.

I am very grateful to be supported financially by such a fine district as well as in encouragement and prayer.

"So then, my dear brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (2 Corinthians 15:58).

In Christ,
Vicar Connor Wondrasch
Pilgrim Lutheran Church

1481 Liberty Street
Green Bay, WI 54304

Dear Saints of the MNS LWML,

My name is Jordan Peiser, and I am a second-year seminarian at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne. I am writing because I wanted to thank you for your prayers and financial support; it is truly a great blessing.

Right now, I am finishing up a vicarage at a church in Illinois as a way to prepare for my year-long vicarage at the end of my second year. I also look forward to continuing my seminary education and being able to worship with my fellow seminarians. Your financial support and prayers help make it all possible.

Thank you!

In Christ,
Jordan Peiser

Dear Ladies of the Minnesota South LWML,

Thank you very much for your generosity and hard work in making the District Aid Grant available to me and other seminarians from Minnesota. This grant will be a great help toward my tuition costs in the coming year.

My goal for the coming year is to apply myself to initial theological study and conversation, focusing on retaining as much as possible so that I can someday serve the church as a well-prepared pastor. I could do none of this on my own, so I'm grateful for your support as I prepare for the years of study ahead.

Yours in Christ,
Peter Wagner



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